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## BACK TO MOSES'S DAY IN EGYPT

Temple Found in Memphis  
May Cast New Light  
on Biblical History

THE work of exploration is left to America in these days. In the field of archaeology, for instance, there are no expeditions of importance anywhere in the world except those sent out from this country; and in Egypt, a land where records of incalculable value to the antiquarian and the historian are buried thickly, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the University of Pennsylvania Museum are the only institutions that have conducted excavations within a year.

As THE SUN has already announced, the expedition representing the university museum has unearthed a thing of splendid importance—the ruins of a temple in Memphis whose inscriptions denote that it was erected during the reign of Seti I. or of his grandson, Merneptah. Prior to Merneptah ruled Rameses II., Caesar of the Nile and the sovereign who held the children of Israel in bondage. Moses, then, may have frequented this temple, and it may be that here Aaron turned the rod into a serpent that ate up all the serpents of the royal magicians. (See Exodus vii, 9-12.) In any event, it is believed that archaeology is about to secure information that will throw important light on Biblical history.

From Philadelphia last winter went the Eckley B. Cox, Jr., expedition under the direction of Clarence S. Fisher, curator of the Egyptian section of the university museum. When he arrived in Cairo on December 16, 1914, he found that England had assumed a protectorate over the land of the Nile, that all German and Austrian concessions for excavating had been forfeited and that the country was teeming with unemployed laborers, many of them experienced in these archaeological undertakings.

He at once set about securing permission from the Department of Antiquities of the Egyptian Government to work upon the sites of Tanis, Memphis and the pyramid fields of Gizeh. Tanis is a city in the western delta of whose existence from the sixth dynasty (beginning 2668 B. C.) to the Roman period there is proof in the massive remains of temples and statues, the latter forty and fifty feet high, dug up several years ago by Prof. W. M. Flinders Petrie, the eminent Egyptologist. In 1913 it was parcelled out to a French and an Austrian company, but operations upon it had never been started.

Mr. Fisher's application for the Austrian half as well as for the German and Austrian concessions in the cemeteries at Gizeh, which had been partly worked, was refused by the British Government, which is reserving all cancelled grants till the close of the war. Mr. Fisher hopes to secure some part of Tanis later.

In one of the most important parts of the Gizeh pyramid fields the Boston museum has been conducting investigations since 1903. Mr. Fisher being formerly associated with Dr. Reisner there. A transfer of part of this site was made by the Boston people to the Eckley B. Cox, Jr., undertaking. This is the greatest old

ONE OF THE OLDEST STATUES  
KNOWN, ABOUT 4000 B. C.

RIBBED VAULT SHOWING INTERLOCKING BRICKS

empire field in Egypt and must yield a rich harvest. Before beginning on Gizeh, where he had decided to work first, Mr. Fisher went over the area of rubbish mounds, stone piles and palm trees at Bredeshen, on the west bank of the Nile fourteen miles south of Cairo, which is all that remains of the Memphis of Egyptian glory, and decided to begin operations upon an untouched portion beneath which he believed lay the ruins of the royal palace of the New Empire period. There was no hitch in getting this concession. But Mr. Fisher has not found the palace. He has found a building of far greater importance to archaeologists and the world at large.

The Gizeh grant was worked from January to March of this year with a force of 180 men. One of the first discoveries was an offering table with two rows of inscriptions around its edge, containing the names of Khufu (Cheops), Khafre and Dedefra. The great pyramid of Khufu (Cheops) towers over these excavations. He was of the fourth dynasty, with a reign beginning 2560 B. C., a noble from middle Egypt, near the modern

Bent Hasan; but no record yet found discloses how he became king. If the size of a pyramid proclaims the importance of the monarch who caused it to be built, then Khufu was indeed a powerful king. His is a monstrous achievement, containing some 2,300,000 blocks, and requiring the work of 100,000 men through twenty years, if we are to believe our old friend Herodotus. The stone was quarried on the opposite side of the river and floated over; it took ten years to build a colossal causeway up which those blocks could be hauled to the plateau on which the pyramid stands.

Khafre, his successor, built the second pyramid at this point. It is smaller and of inferior workmanship, but at the east margin of it are the scanty ruins of a pyramid temple. The great sphinx guards the entrance to this and to the causeway running to the pyramid enclosure above, and archaeologists have long tried to determine whether Khafre was responsible for the great sphinx. There is a possibility that the inscriptions on the offering

HEAD OF STATUETTE FOUND  
AT MEMPHIS

CARVING IN TEMPLE

table just discovered will when deciphered throw light on this problem. Dedefra was a mysterious monarch of whom little is known, and he has been tentatively placed in the fourth

COLUMNS OF  
TEMPLE  
UNEARTHED  
AT MEMPHISPennsylvania University  
Expedition Excavates  
Many Rare Articles

tiolated. The great granite sphinx which stands in the courtyard of the university museum stood in the temple of Ptah in the city of Memphis founded in 4000 B. C. Prof. Petrie dug it up in 1912.

It is the aim of the Eckley B. Cox, Jr., expedition to carry on the Memphis excavations in the thorough, systematic, unhurried manner characterizing Petrie's work. There is much to be done. He has "merely scratched the surface." Sand from the desert and mud from the Nile through centuries have accumulated, burying the city far below; and since the Moslem conquest the site has been used as a quarry for building stone, much of nearby Cairo having been built from it. Operations present many difficulties.

The surface stratum was found covered with heavy mud brick walls of Roman or Ptolemaic origin—that is, 30 B. C. or 323 B. C. A trench was sunk down through this to the water level, and as the seepage of the Nile would interfere with results a pump was installed to keep the trench dry. Mr. Fisher then built a railroad to carry to a distance the rubbish removed, thereby immensely facilitating operations.

Below the first stratum is a layer whose period of occupation has not been determined, and below that were found traces of a wall of such proportions that Mr. Fisher was certain he had come upon his royal palace. Near it were two projecting columns that Prof. Petrie had partly uncovered. On April 10 Mr. Fisher wrote to the museum:

"I am sure that we have the beginnings of the palace here. The columns bear long inscriptions and the panels of the doors have also inscriptions and reliefs of the King Merneptah making offerings to different deities."

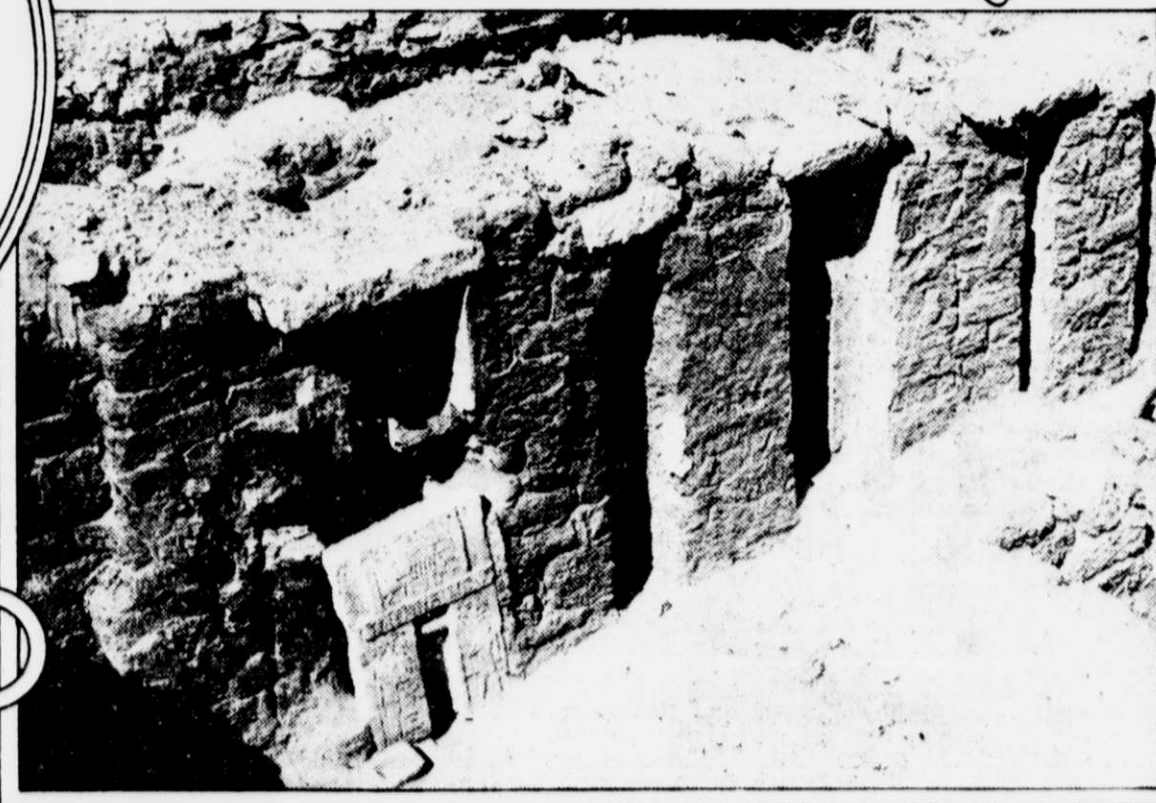
But as the work progressed it developed that this was a temple of King Seti I. or his grandson, not the royal palace of the New Empire. We know from papyri and monuments already deciphered that a temple was built in Memphis by Seti I. and that his son, Rameses II., rebuilt it; statues of the king have been unearthed here by other excavators. Merneptah was the thirteenth son of Rameses II. and reigned from 1234 B. C. to 1214 B. C. But whether it is the temple of Seti I. or of Merneptah, this is a find of far greater importance than the palace would have been. The best authorities now place the date of the exodus at 1213 B. C. and identify Rameses as the Pharaoh referred to. Merneptah, we read, maintained friendly relations with his Hittite neighbors, but during the troubled days of his successor, when anarchy ruled, the supposition is that Moses led his brethren out of the land of bondage.

Moses, then, was in Egypt when Merneptah was king. The world will wait with interest for possible light upon Moses or the Israelites from this expedition.

But its task is tedious and requires infinite patience. When the columns referred to above were completely freed from their encircling debris they were coated with mud and the surface of the stone itself was wet and soft. They could not be cleaned and examined until dried in the sun, after which the earth peeled off.

The greatest skill must be exercised in handling the stone beneath. There have been many breaks. Many cracks; portions are chipped off or are loose. A rough or hasty touch may destroy an invaluable record.

It is impossible to keep Egyptian workmen at their posts during the hot spell, and toward the last of June Mr. Fisher discontinued excavations. In another week he will be back at the Memphis temple. Besides the

BRONZE STATUETTE  
OF PTAH.

OFFERTORIUM IN THE TEMPLE

dynasty. The association of his name here would indicate that he has been rightly dated. This is the fourth example of his cartouche found.

Another important find is an offering chamber built of mud bricks with a ribbed vault of especially designed brick with interlocking joints. This is the first time that this type of construction has been turned up in the excavation of any ancient site. A statue in relief and stone were in the chamber, all in excellent state. Mr. Fisher places the tomb in which it was found "not later than the sixth dynasty." It might well be much earlier, since the King Zoser in 2668 B. C. introduced the first stone tombs, and those structures in brick went out of fashion.

A painted statuette about fifteen inches high was found in a small walled up niche in this chamber, and is in the best method of the artists of the fifth and sixth dynasties. The museum authorities think it is one of the oldest statues known, with a probable date of 4000 B. C.

In March the Pennsylvania section moved camp to Memphis and began work there on the 13th. The outbreak of the war had terminated the research of Prof. Petrie here, which he had been conducting since 1906 and in which the University of Pennsylvania had par-

information he believes he will find regarding Biblical history. American archaeologists think that there is a strong likelihood of his getting eventually to strata below this one, to depths yet unturned, and finding traces there of the prehistoric Memphites, those people obviously not barbarians who were there before Menes, there before 5000 B. C., and of whom the Nile seems to have washed away every impression.

Four thousand small articles, all told, have thus far been added to the Egyptian department of the museum by this operation in Memphis. Among them are many busts of terra cotta, scarabs, gold jewelry, amulets, stone vases. There is the head of a statue of red sandstone and one of a limestone statuette. Neither has the rock crystal eyes given to statues in this remarkable era, but they may have dropped out in the course of the thousands of years they have been buried, for the cavities are still there.

One head may be that of a slave, or of any one of the numerous foreign and inferior races gathered in the Memphis of that day; the other displays a striking countenance. It wears a headdress, which may indicate a monarch or subject prince, and a high order of intelligence is denoted by the features.